individual/departments have already been sent to the Government, further investigation of the case is going on and exact nature of the lapses on the part of various departments and officials will be clear only after this part of investigation is completed. Efforts are being made by CBI to complete this work also at the earliest. Details can be given after completion of investigation.

Voluntary retirement scheme, in Textile Industry

*110. SHRI MUKESH R. PATEL:
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the progress made in the implementation of Voluntary Retirement Scheme in Textile industry;

(b) the details thereof;

(c) whether his Ministry has received the request from the State Government of Maharashtra to reimburse the amount under NRF Scheme; and

(d) if so, by when it will be reimbursed?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b) The progress of implementation of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) in the textile undertakings under the Ministry of Textiles, is as follows:

Name of Undertaking	No. of worker's who availed VRS upto 31.3.97
National Textile Corporation Ltd. & its subsidiaries	46,217
British India Corporation Ltd. (BIC)	1099
Elgin Mills Company Ltd.*	3881
Cawnpore Textile Ltd.*	847

(* BIC subsidiaries)

(c) and (d) The State Government of Maharashtra has requested Ministry of Industry for assistance of Rs. 74.83 crores from the National Renewal Fund (NRF) for payment of gratuity and compensation under VRS to the staff of Maharashtra State Textile Corporation Ltd. and the Textile Corporation of Marathwada Ltd.

According to Ministry of Industry, assistance from the NRF is presently restricted to the VRS in Central PSUs and of the scheme of retraining and counselling.

Telephone connections in Post Offices and Village Panchayats in Gujarat

*111. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Post Offices in Gujarat where telephone connections are yet to be provided; and

(b) the number of Panchayats where no telephone connection with STP facility has been provided so far and the steps being taken by Government for installa tion of telephones with STD facility in all the Panchayats in the State?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VAR-MA): (a) 6446 number of Post Offices in Gujarat are not having telephone facilities.

(b) There are total 13,510 Gram Panchayats in Gujarat. So facility is available in 3879 Panchayats of Gujarat as on 30th June, 1997. However 12,456 Gram Panchayats in Gujarat have been provided with Village Public Telephones (VPTs) facilities and these are without STD as on 30th June, 1997- Government is having plan to provide STD facilities to all Exchanges during IXth plan period from where STD can be provided on demand.

Amount spent on National Highway No. 5

*112. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the "Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state: